



## Study Shows No Cognitive Effects with Lamotrigine used in Children

School-age children with mild or well-controlled epilepsy demonstrate no cognitive changes associated with lamotrigine (Lamictal) used as adjunctive therapy, according to results of a double-blind, placebo-controlled, crossover study.

Similar studies conducted in adults have shown that lamotrigine is actually better tolerated than other long-established antiepileptic drugs (AEDs). However, the current study by Dr. R. M. Pressler, a neurologist at King's College Hospital in London, and associates is the first randomized controlled trial using formal neuropsychological testing in children, ages 7 to 17 years.

After undergoing a 4-week phase during which placebo was used, the 61 patients underwent two 9-week phases where they were treated with add-on lamotrigine or placebo, in random order, with a 5-week cross-over phase. The doses of lamotrigine were those recommended at the time of the study, based on age, weight, and concomitant AEDs. According to their report in the May 23rd issue of *Neurology*, seizure frequency was similar during each treatment phase.

No significant difference was found in continuous performance, binary choice reaction time, verbal and nonverbal recognition, computerized visual searching task, verbal and spatial delayed recognition, and verbal and nonverbal working memory between placebo and lamotrigine treatment phase.

Further study is recommended of the effects on children using lamotrigine as monotherapy, and longer term studies in children directly comparing different AEDs. *NEUROLOGY* 2006

### Epilepsy Medication Usage Increases Risk of Bone Fractures

*Thank you for the bone density article in the April ERC Hotline. My daughter has a neurologist and a family doctor and neither ever mentioned the risk of increased bone fractures from taking her seizure medicine. I spoke with her doctor and we got her a bone index scan.*  
— Carol C.

**Editor's Note:** Bone density problems are caused mostly by the enzyme inducing class of anti-epileptic drugs including Carbamazepine (Tegretol/Carbatrol); Ethosuximide (Zarontin); Oxcarbazepine (Trileptal); phenobarbital; Phenytoin (Dilantin); Primidone (Mysoline); and Topiramate (Topamax).

**Adult Epilepsy Support Group**  
Meets Second Tuesday of Month, 6:30 PM • 2919 W. 2nd Street, Wichita  
July 11th: "Knowledge is Power" Aug 8th: "Seizures & Sexuality"

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## Advocates Get Subcommittee Push for Epilepsy Funding

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, Education and Related Agencies has restored funding for the CDC Epilepsy Program at \$7.684 million! The overall allocation was just enough to keep most programs funded at the same level as last year, restore some of the programs proposed for elimination and adjust some programs up or down slightly.

- The epilepsy demonstration program at the Health Resources Services Administration was level funded at \$3 million.
- The Maternal and Child Health Block Grant was increased slightly from \$693 million in FY 2006 to \$700 million for FY 2007.
- Funding for the National Institutes of Health sustained a very small cut. Funding for NIH overall is \$28.3 billion.
- Funding for the National Institute for Neurological Disorders and Stroke, where epilepsy research is primarily conducted, was given a small cut of \$10,000, reducing funding to \$1.524 billion.
- Funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act programs remained level.

Restoration of the CDC Epilepsy Program is a testimony of success from all the advocates that contacted their elected officials. Your stories and actions were moving and assisted our champions in the congress to make the case to the appropriators. You asked Members to sign the Dear Colleague letters in the Senate and House, and many members did! This action went a long way in convincing the Chairman that there are many members of congress who care about epilepsy.

The subcommittee bill will now move to the full appropriations committee for approval next week and then to the House floor. The Senate will likely begin work on a similar bill in July.

### Cyberonics & Via Christi Epilepsy Center host a monthly seminar on VNS Therapy®

Learn more about VNS Therapy; get answers to your questions; evaluate if the treatment is right for you

**THIRD WEDNESDAY** of the month 11:30 -12:30

**Lunch is served, you must RSVP to attend.**

*Note: The meetings are subject to cancellation.*

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